



# **FACE Program Fact Sheet**

## **Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation**

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## **LABORER DIES AFTER FALLING THROUGH SNOW-COVERED SKYLIGHT ON ROOFTOP**

### ***BACKGROUND***

The Wisconsin Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program received reports of 93 fatal occupational injuries during 1999. One of those occurred when a laborer at a manufacturing company fell through a hidden, unguarded skylight.

This fact sheet describes the incident and requests that occupational safety professionals and employers bring the following recommendations to the attention of their employees.

### ***THE INCIDENT***

A 43-year-old laborer at a manufacturing company died after falling through a skylight and landing on a concrete floor 14 feet below. The victim and a co-worker had volunteered to clear snow from the roof of the company building after their regular work day was finished. A flat roof over the first story portion of the company was covered with drifted snow, which varied in depth from several inches to more than 3 feet in places. The snow completely covered the tops of skylights in this area of the roof. It is believed that the victim failed to see the unguarded, three-foot square skylight and stepped onto it while walking. The plastic bubble of the skylight broke, and the victim fell to the concrete floor.



### ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

To prevent future fatalities of this type, employers should:

- **install barrier guards around skylight openings.**
- **lock all doors that provide access to unguarded rooftops.**
- **provide training in the recognition and avoidance of unsafe conditions to workers who are assigned tasks outside their normal duties.**

**The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, in agreement with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) conducts research on occupational fatalities. The Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program focuses on identifying factors that increase the risk of work-related fatal injuries. The Wisconsin FACE Program helps in the development and use of improved safety measures for preventing fatal work injuries.**

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# **PLEASE POST**

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**FACE information is produced and distributed to provide current, relevant education on methods to prevent severe work-related injuries.**

**If you have comments or questions, please call the FACE Project at 608/266-7298, or write:**

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